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**(Draft )Phase 1A for  
Dagsboro Intersection Improvements Project**

**SR 26 (Vines Creek Road) and RD 334 (Main Street)  
Dagsboro, Sussex County, Delaware**

**Prepared for the Delaware Department of Transportation's (DelDOT)  
Planning Section**

**by**

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**February 8, 2002**

## **SUMMARY**

The Environmental Studies section of the Delaware Department of Transportation conducted a Phase 1A evaluation for the intersection of Rt. 26 and Rd 334 (Main Street) in Dagsboro, Sussex County. A Phase 1A is the initial planning tool of the Section 106 process in which all relevant secondary and readily available primary source material on the prehistory and history of the project area is obtained and presented. Moreover, a Phase 1A includes checking the Delaware Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) Inventory and National Register files to determine previously identified historic properties in the project area. Enough information should be obtained to identify possible historic contexts, property types, and archaeology likely to be encountered.

Based on these guidelines, this Phase 1A survey identified ten standing structures within the APE that are over fifty years old, and therefore potentially eligible for the National Register. In addition, a potential historic district has been identified including that portion of Main Street in the project area. Furthermore, a potential archaeological site associated with CRS site S-763 is located near the project intersection on Vines Creek Road. Based on the present alignment, historic properties could be affected by this project. Therefore, further cultural resource work will be necessary to determine if the standing structures and potential archaeological site are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

## Introduction

*and traffic backups*

The purpose of this Phase 1A survey is to inform the Planning Section of DelDOT of the potential historic resources within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) of proposed intersection improvements in Dagsboro, Delaware. The project area includes the intersection of SR 26 and Rd. 334 (Main Street) in Dagsboro. The proposed improvement includes realigning the intersection to remove the current slow-down along SR 26. Project needs were previously assessed in the Route 26 Planning Study Systems Analysis and Needs Report, and they included congestion and operational deficiencies at this location. The APE includes the intersection of Vines Creek Road and Main Street, and is bounded north of the intersection by Bridge 424 over Pepper Creek, down to approximately the 229 Main Street Property south of the intersection, and east of the intersection to 105 Vines Creek Road (See Figure 5 for APE). The APE may be broadened or decreased as more specific plans develop.

## Research Design

Goals of the survey included identifying previously documented historic properties within the APE, identifying properties that are 50 years or older in the APE, identifying potential archaeological sites, and conducting preliminary background research to elicit any readily available historic information about the project area. Ultimately, the Phase 1A is intended to give DelDOT's Planning section a reasonable indication of possible cultural resources that may be affected by this eventual undertaking. Since the project is only in the planning stage, this broad level of survey is adequate to preliminarily identify these resources.

## Methods

First, a "windshield" survey was conducted in October 2001 to identify the types of structures, landscape, and general setting of the project area by DelDOT Environmental Studies staff, Kevin Cunningham and Patrick Carpenter. The purpose of this "windshield survey" was to identify properties that were at least fifty years old within the project area, and thus may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the area was scoped for potential archaeology. While at the project site, DelDOT personnel spoke with a local resident, Ms. Irene Asper, a long-time resident, who offered some insights into her specific house and the surrounding area.

Second, research was conducted at the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office. Survey maps were examined to locate previously identified resources within the APE, and copies of previously completed National Register and CRS forms were obtained. Other preliminary research included the use of historic maps, archived construction plans, and resources at the Delaware Public Archives.

## Expected Results

Based on the project's location in Sussex County, a heavily traveled thoroughfare for summer beach traffic, it was expected that the area would be mixed-use, with rural complexes, suburban dwellings, and former residential dwellings converted into small businesses. Also, it was anticipated that some of these structures would be older than fifty years, since this particular intersection has been

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established for at least 150 years, and is close to downtown Dagsboro, which is over 200 years old. Architecturally, the houses were deemed likely to resemble the architectural styles and vernacular variations of catalog homes and other popular designs common to the early twentieth century.

### Environmental Setting

As detailed in the Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, the soil of the Lower Peninsula/Cypress Swamp zone range from moderately well to poorly drained with a subsoil of sandy clay or loam. This section of Dagsboro is characterized by Evesboro Loamy Sand (EvB), usually associated with two to five percent slopes. Other Evesboro Loamy Sand associated with five to fifteen percent slopes (EsD) are in the area. <sup>5mils</sup> p. 52

Major flora of the region include cypress, loblolly pine, tulip, magnolia, cedar maple, ash and oak. Early descriptions of the area label it has forest (Ames, 35). Pepper Creek, a tributary of the Indian River flows through the northern end of the project area. The creek runs at the toe of the slope of the small ridge on which Dagsboro was settled. On the westside of Main Street, Pepper Creek has been channelized. Generally, the intersection is the lowest point in the vicinity, as each road from the current T-intersection follows an upward slope heading away from that point. Land-use includes rural-agricultural, suburban-residential, and light commercial.

### Historical Overview

The first settlement of Delaware was established by the Dutch in the present day town of Lewes in 1631. Unfortunately, a year later the settlers had been killed and their buildings burned by local Indians. Another colony was not settled until 1638, when a Swedish group landed at present day Wilmington and established Fort Christina. In 1655, Peter Stuyvesant came from New Amsterdam with a Dutch Fleet and conquered those areas owned by the Swedes. However, both of these countries would face a mightier empire builder in England. Eventually, the three counties now known as New Castle, Kent, and Sussex came under English rule, and were granted to William Penn in 1682. Not all conflict was settled however, as Maryland's Lord Baltimore and William Penn quarreled over the boundary of present day Sussex County. In fact, Dagsboro was once considered apart of Maryland. Nevertheless, when the Mason-Dixon line was drawn by 1768, the boundary conflict was finally resolved, and the present boundaries of the state were formed.

During this period in Sussex County, towns and hamlets formed, expanded, and declined according to local and regional conditions. In the Lower Peninsula region, both the transportation network and the settlement pattern focused on gristmills and sawmills. These mill seats sometimes expanded into larger towns, such as Laurel (1802), Millsboro (1792), and Dagsboro (1774) (De Cunzo, Catts, 61). Gristmills were common in this area as the Indian River and its tributaries provided abundant waterpower. The early descriptions for Dagsboro hundred mentioned an abundant growth of pine and cedar forests. In the southern part of the hundred, there was extensive cypress swamps. These forests were profitably utilized in manufacturing of lumber and shingles (Conrad, 733). Therefore, the settlers of Dagsboro had good reason for living there, with plenty of natural resources to sustain themselves.

Dagsboro has been known as Dagsbury, Dagsborough, and originally Blackfoot Town. However its been wrote, called, or pronounced since the late eighteenth century, Dagsboro has been a barometer of the change that has occurred in the rest of the state of Delaware. As economic and

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cultural forces changed Delaware's people and landscape, Dagsboro has been a microcosm of that evolution. Dagsboro began as a hamlet settled around a gristmill, to a small largely self-sufficient commercial center near a major north-south highway (U.S. 113) serving the needs of travelers and locals, to a mostly vacant downtown with suburban development stretching beyond its borders.

Originally called Blackfoot Town, Dagsboro was first settled at the site of a gristmill at the head of Pepper Creek, a tributary of the Indian River (Hancock, 58). The origin of the name Blackfoot Town is unclear, but Delaware archaeologists in the 1950s theorized that the name derived from a connection to "negroes" or "mixed-bloods" (Dunlap and Weslager, 49). The archaeologists considered that most likely this was a derisive term. They also suggested that there was also a small likelihood of a connection between the Blackfoot Indians of Canada, through contract with fur traders. Regardless of its origins, the name and town was well established by the 1750s (Dunlap and Weslager, 49). Further evidence of this early date of settlement was the construction of St. George's Chapel by 1757.

The settlement eventually was renamed Dagsboro, after General John Dagworthy. A veteran of the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War, Dagworthy received a tract of land in Worcester County, Maryland (now Sussex County, Delaware) at the head of Pepper's Creek. In 1774, Dagworthy's tracts were resurveyed under William Penn and called "Dagworthy's Conquest," which included 20, 300 acres (Scharf, 1335). After receiving this generous land grant, Dagworthy settled near Blackfoot Town and began operation of a gristmill. The noted historian Thomas J. Scharf described the location of the gristmill as being at the Dagsborough Bridge near the state road (1339). The exact location of the gristmill is unclear, but more research might reveal if Bridge 424 over Pepper Creek could be the same Dagsborough Bridge Scharf mentions.

Dagworthy and his family lived in a mansion on Piney Creek Road facing south across a sloping lawn towards Pepper Creek. Until it was destroyed by fire in the nineteenth century, the Dagworthy mansion was considered the finest in the county (FWP, 389). In addition to gristmills, Dagworthy operated sawmills, and tanneries while his slaves cultivated hundreds of acres of cleared land. The Brigadier General exported large quantities of timber, lumber, and shingles on vessels out of the Indian River (FWP, 389).

It was once written of Dagworthy, "John Dagworthy, he is a honest, bold man, well affected to the government; is of the Church of England;" (Scharf, 1335). Another description was also flattering, "Here, surrounded by his family and a retinue of slaves, he dispensed a liberal hospitality to his many friends and admirers (Marshall, 17). When Dagworthy died in 1784, Blackfoot Town was formally renamed Dagsboro in honor of its notable citizen. Upon his request, John Dagworthy was buried in the chancel of St. George's Chapel east of Dagsboro. By the time of Dagworthy's death, and in part thanks to him, Dagsboro was well established as a result of its agricultural base and ancillary industries.

Before reliable roads connected Dagsboro to other parts of the state, the Indian River via Pepper Creek was the town's primary outlet for shipping and receiving goods, but at least by 1800, the major north-south road in Delaware terminated at Dagsboro (Spero, 170). By 1827, the principal north-south route had split into two routes, one heading from Dover to Dagsboro and the other from Dover to Laurel (Spero, 175). Dagsboro's location on this road helped the town to prosper and support several businesses (See Figure 3). The Beer's Atlas of 1868 shows two general merchandise stores and a hotel in Dagsboro. By 1888, there were four stores and a physician (Dr. Thomas Hitch) in Dagsboro (Scharf, 1339). Further economic and cultural opportunities awaited the town once a branch of the

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Junction and Breakwater Railroad line, running from Harrington to Lewes, was extended between Georgetown to the state line in Selbyville by 1874 (Lichtenstein, 2000). Still more transportation improvements were to come.

Construction began in September 1911 on the Coleman DuPont Highway, running just west of Dagsboro, one of the most modern roads of its time. The first twenty miles of the road, from the Maryland Line near Selbyville to six miles south of Milford was completed and presented to Delaware on May 24, 1917 (Spero, 182). A modern road such as the Coleman du Pont Highway allowed Dagsboro residents to import and export goods, and travel to other parts of the state much easier. Dagsboro's strategic location near major roads and railroads provided ample economic opportunities for residents, and especially local farmers.

By far, the major industry at the turn of the twentieth century continued to center on agricultural production. In the nineteenth century, corn became the dominant crop in Sussex County, with a production of 1,676,000 bushels in 1900. In addition to corn, Sussex County became the peach producing center of Delaware by 1890 (De Cunzo, Catts, 81). The lumber industry still provided another significant source of income in the Lower Peninsula region. Over 55 million cubic feet of timber was shipped from Sussex County in 1909. Most of this lumber was provided from virgin Sussex Pine (De Cunzo, Catts, 82). The profitability of these products would not have been possible without the railroads and roads to transport these goods to larger markets.

The era of the automobile enhanced the growth of urban and crossroad centers like Dagsboro, with the effect of relocating elements of the rural population in a different landscape context. As Dagsboro's population grew so did its physical size, resulting in new neighborhoods and houses being laid out around its older section (Herman, Siders, 62). During this time, towns expanding rapidly as evidenced by a rich architectural tradition. Houses representing a variety of fashionable and popular styles such as Queen Anne, bungalows, and four-squares lined the avenues and sidestreets of the towns in Sussex County (Herman, 63). Clearly, the structures near the intersection of Rt. 26 in Dagsboro fit this pattern of an automobile, suburban influence. These homes were laid out from the original town design and they represent popular and national trends, not possible before mass transportation. It was during this period, that pattern and catalog homes reached their zenith. This suburban outlook within this agricultural setting was even adopted by local farmers as evidenced by numerous four-squares fronting the road with acres of chicken houses behind them.

None of this development could have been possible without a solid agricultural or manufacturing base. In more urban New Castle County, manufacturing provided an economic foundation, while in Sussex County new agricultural products helped provide that that avenue of economic stability. Farmers in Sussex County began experimenting with new agricultural products not only peaches and strawberries, but also chickens. In 1923, Mrs. Wilmer Steele, a farmer in Ocean View, began raising chickens for profit to be sold in urban markets, such as Wilmington and Philadelphia. By 1944, other farmers had followed her example to raise a combined sixty million broilers (chickens weighing under three pounds) annually in the southeastern portion of the county in the vicinity of Millsboro and Selbyville (De Cunzo, Catts 83). with ~~the~~

Despite a period of resettlement and growth in the years between 1880-1940, Dagsboro remained a small town. A description of Dagsboro in the Federal Writer's Project's Delaware: A Guide to the First State published in 1938 offers a unique glimpse of the town near mid-century. The Guide depicted Dagsboro as, "an unhurried little village of shady streets and mellow old cypress and

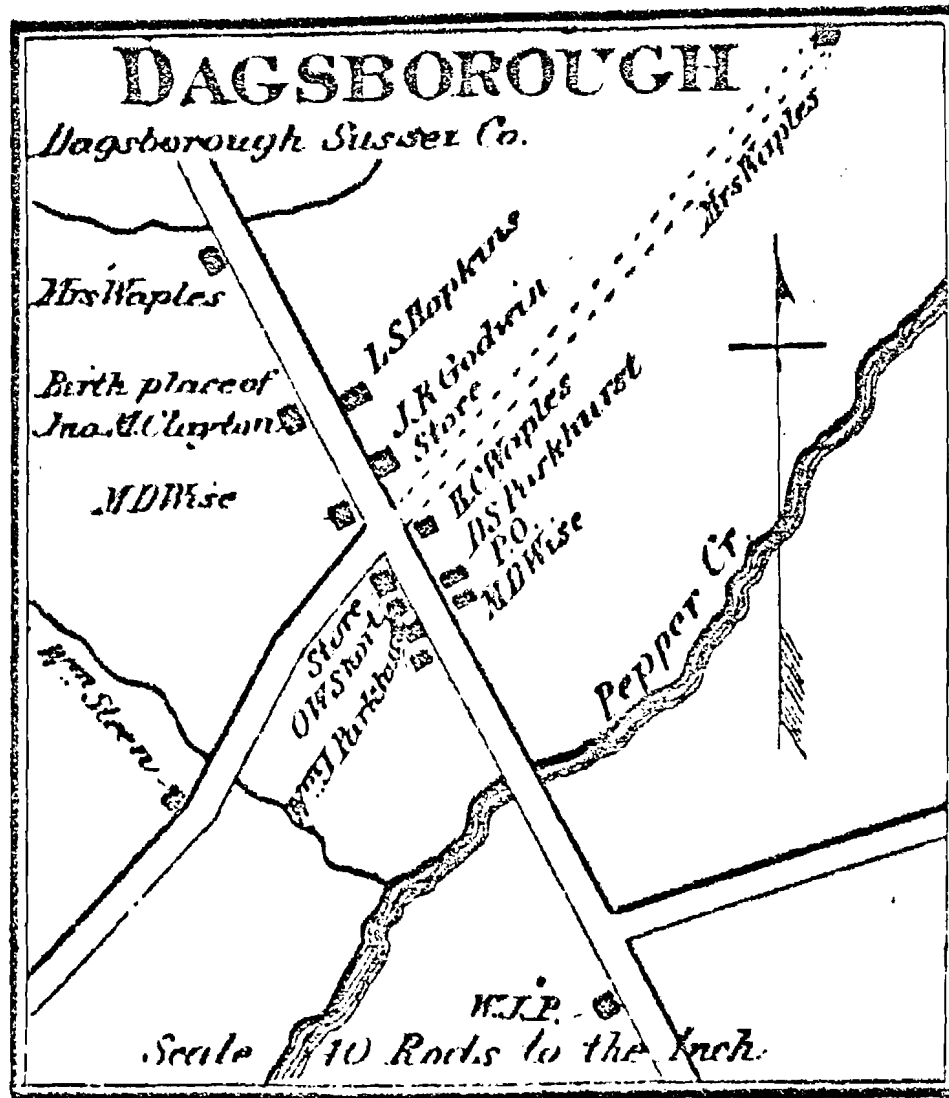


**Figure 3: Atlas of the State  
of Delaware**

D.G. Beers, 1868

Dagsborough Hundred, Inset

(not to scale)



## Dagsborough Business Directory.

- L. S. Hopkins...Proprietor of Dagsborough Hotel.
- O. W. Short...Dealer in General Merchandise.
- J. R. Godwin...Dealer in General Merchandise.
- Daniel S. Parkhurst...Post Master.





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shingled houses with mossy roofs” (FWP, 387). With a population of 198 at the time, Dagsboro was portrayed as a distributing center for feed and coal consumed by the great broiler industry (FWP, 387). Clearly, Dagsboro became a thriving, albeit small, community near important transportation routes and profitable agricultural based economy. Even now, some residents depend on agriculture for their livelihood, others use nearby roads to drive to work and shop, and still others only see Dagsboro on their way to the beach. Although Dagsboro has changed with the times, it has remained a multi-functioning town and community.

Today, Dagsboro, with a population of approximately 500, remains a quiet village supporting a small klatch of stores. Agriculture focusing on poultry sustains many in the area, and U.S. 113 (DuPont Highway) provides access to jobs in other towns. Like other small downtowns, Dagsboro’s own has faced attrition of its stores to the busily traveled duPont highway. Nevertheless, Dagsboro streets are filled with travelers heading towards the Atlantic Beaches in the summer months, and small stores including a one-screen movie theater, a bed and breakfast, and deli offer residents, visitors and beach-goers a place to spend their money. Despite two hundred years of flux and change, Dagsboro still maintains that quiet demeanor described nearly 65 years ago.

### Standing Structures

As defined by the Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, the project area is defined as follows:

Zone: Lower Peninsula /Cypress Swamp

Period: 1880-1940+/-; Urbanization and Early Suburbanization

Theme: Settlement Patterns and Demographic Change

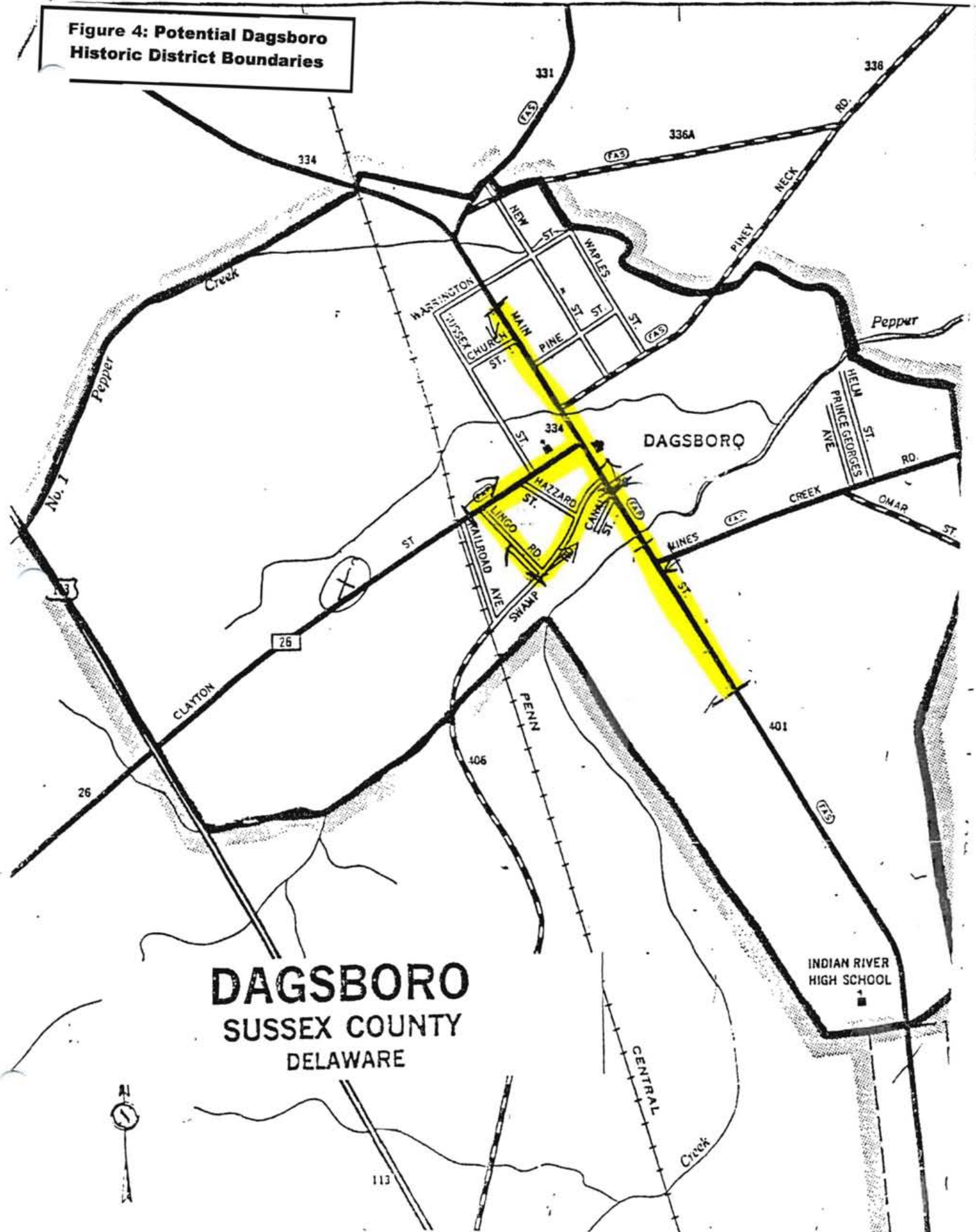
Property Type: Mixed Function District

Based on research conducted at the State Historic Preservation Office inventory files, it was determined that the project lies within the potential Dagsboro Historic District. The evaluation sheet delineates the boundary as such, “ The district encompasses the village settlement along Main Street (north-south corridor), and includes the area to the west of Main Street bounded by Clayton Street to the north, Lingo Road to the west, and Swamp Road to the south.” According to the boundary description, the district extends south past the intersection, encompassing most of the project area (Figure 4).

According to the historic district evaluation sheet, and corresponding to the Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, the district fits within the 1880-1940 +/-; Urbanization and Early Suburbanization time period. Furthermore, the historic theme is Settlement Patterns and Demographic Change with the property type described as Mixed Function District. The significance of the Dagsboro district resides on its settlement history (influenced by the railroad) and architecture. Therefore, the district meets Criterion A and C. From a preliminary field analysis, the properties along the Main Street corridor are likely to be contributing elements to the district.

The period of significance for this district as determined by the SHPO is 1880-1940 +/-, urbanization and early suburbanization. During this time and before, the population of Kent and Sussex remained stable, while New Castle County increased rapidly. According to the preservation plan, the stable nature of Sussex County allowed new development to be integrated with the old, creating a historic landscape of incremental change (44). Part of the settlement change occurred

**Figure 4: Potential Dagsboro  
Historic District Boundaries**



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because of the construction of Route 13 and improvement of secondary roads in the 1920s. These improvements reoriented overland transportation networks, collapsed the distances between town and back country, and reconfigured towns by renovating strong commercial centers and creating industrial fringes (Ames, 51).

The historic theme of settlement patterns and demographic change recognizes that the built environment is not static but responsive to, and the medium for the expression of cultural, social, and economic change. The evolution of that physical environment is tied to changes in population growth, stability, and decline (Ames, 28). Moreover, this historic theme includes the general urbanization of the state as reflected in the percentage of urban population, the growing and economic focus of all areas in Delaware on major urban centers, and spatially, the changing pattern of settlement in the state related to urban places (Ames, 28).

SHPO file search revealed locations of previously identified sites in and near the project area. Currently, the only identified site within the APE is S-763. A former five bay, two-story, side gable house resided at this location. A survey form completed in 1976 noted that the house was slated for demolition. Presently, the site, east several hundred feet from the Rt. 26 intersection is vacant. A sign advertising that the site is for sale as commercial development is the only visible object on the lot. Dependent on the level of disturbance on the empty lot, archaeological resources associated with the house are possible and its probable outbuildings is possible

Another demolished property was also identified on SHPO files as S-764. According to SHPO files, a grain mill was located on Swamp Road, north of the project area. The file states that the grain mill was built in 1938 and before its demolition was owned by Harry Burtram of Frankford, Delaware. Evidently, by 1976, the mill was delapidated and empty. Although the grain mill site is not within the APE, its presence further established the multi-function nature of this district.

Two other recorded buildings are near the project area. S-768 and S-767 are located north of the project area on Main Street. S-768 is identified as a Greek Revival house built at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. S-767 is identified as a four-square type house, constructed circa 1920. These structures follow the time pattern of the buildings within the project area. These properties are north of the project area, and are not within the APE.

One National Register listed property is located near, but not in the APE. Prince Georges Chapel rests east of the intersection on Vines Creek Road. The Chapel was built in 1755, as requested by members from the Church of England to the Maryland Assembly since at this time, Dagsboro Hundred was considered part of Maryland. Although the church is not within the APE, any change in the project should consider that St. George's Chapel is a significant religious, cultural, and architectural building.

While out in the field, we happened to meet Mrs. Irene Asper, who lives on Main Street. Mrs. Asper discussed briefly the history of her house and the local area. According to Mrs. Asper, her house was formally a grocery store and filling station. Until recently, Mrs. Asper operated a floral shop in the front-porch addition of the house, but the shop seems to be now out of business. Mrs. Asper indicated that her house was built in 1941 on the site of a former one room, with two-room upstairs house. Additionally, she explained that the gas station across the street was built on an empty lot. According to the 1955 (revised 1972) USGS map, this lot was vacant at least until 1972. Mrs. Asper also remembered when the road leading to Frankford was once a dirt road.

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The same USGS map also indicates that a structure was present north of Pepper Creek across from the ice plant. Evidently, the structure was gone sometime after 1972. A small utility station occupies the location currently, so if the alignment extends past the stream, disturbance is likely to have destroyed intact archaeological sites.

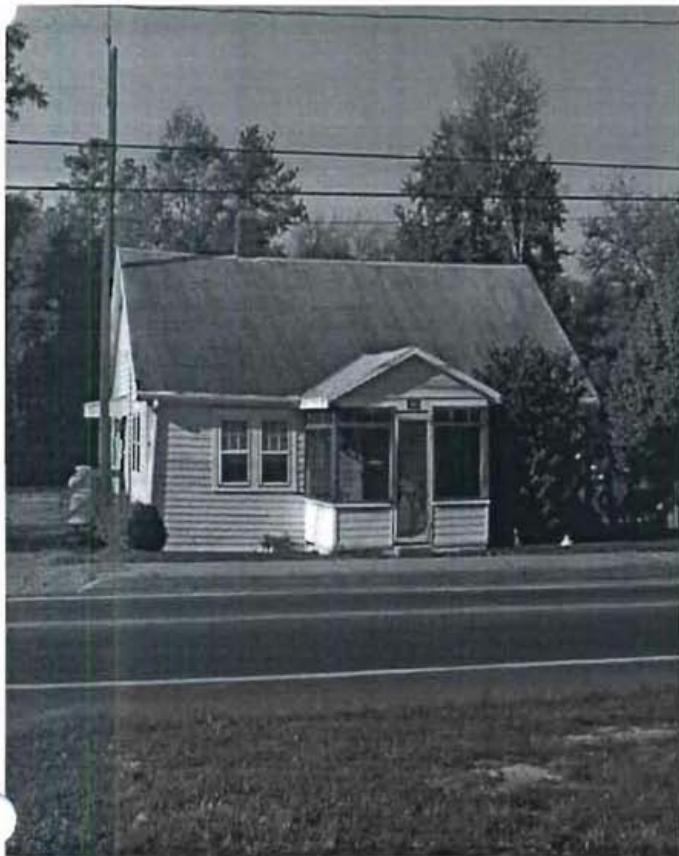
Construction plans from 1936 reveal that the existing sidewalk from Dagsboro to Frankford was slated for construction at that time. This 4ft sidewalk still connects these two towns, offering extra support that further suburban type development was expected. The plans also indicate several standing structures in the project that are no longer extant. Opposite of Vines Creek Road, the map shows a filling station with gas pumps, which corresponds to Mrs. Asper's recollection. Further towards the downtown, north of Pepper Creek, on the westside of Main Street, the plans indicate an ice plant along with a one and one-half story frame house (Contract # 249A). Although the filling station and ice plant are no longer standing, the records of their existence offer evidence that this section of Dagsboro was indeed a mixed-function district. See Figure 6 for a contemporary view of Dagsboro.

### Properties within the APE (see Figure 5)

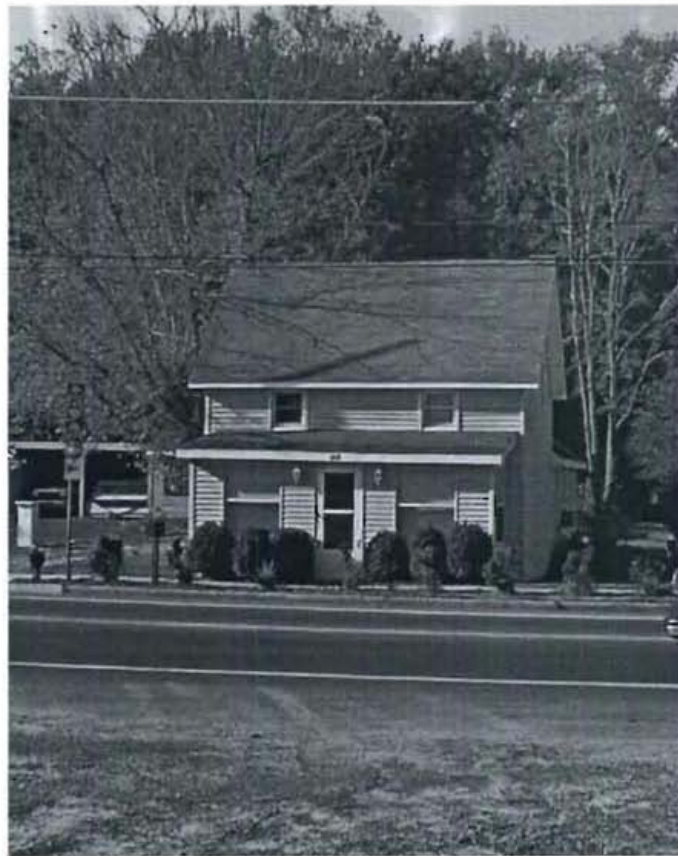
Property	Photo #	Approx. Date of Construction	Brief Description
307 Main Street		1975	Modern ranch, site of former ice plant
Bridge 424	18	1988	Box culvert over Pepper Creek
305 Main Street	1,18	1935	One and one-half story, side gable cottage
303 Main Street	2,18	1925	Side gable, two story, with front and rear additions, and replacement windows
301 Main Street	4,18	1940	Side gable, two and one-half story, five-bay, massed plan. Previously a filling station.
Sheds/Garages (301 Main Street)	3	1940	Front gabled and flat roofs, interconnected
235 Main Street	5,6	1940	Front gable, rectangular, one and one-half story, built on piers
233 Main Street	7	1910	Hipped roof four-square, side-gable with two-story bay window, wrap around porch
229 Main Street	8	1960	Rectangular, concrete block one-story dwelling, at site of former two-story house
232 Main Street	9	1945	Ranch/minimal traditional
236 Main Street	10,11	1910	Four-square with <sup>hipped</sup> pyramidal roof and side gable w/two-story bay window
102 Vines Creek Road		1970	Modern dwelling.
104 Vines Creek Road	??	1950	Brick ranch
105 Vines Creek Road	??	1950	Minimal traditional
S-763, Vines Creek Road	12,13,14	House destroyed circa 1976	Two-story, five-bay, side-gabled house
Corner of Vines Creek and Main Street	15,16,17, 18	1960	Former gas-station, Rectangular, concrete block, two-bay garage doors facing Main Street



**Photo 1-305 Main Street**



**Photo 2-303 Main Street**



**Photo 3-301 Main Street (outbuildings)**

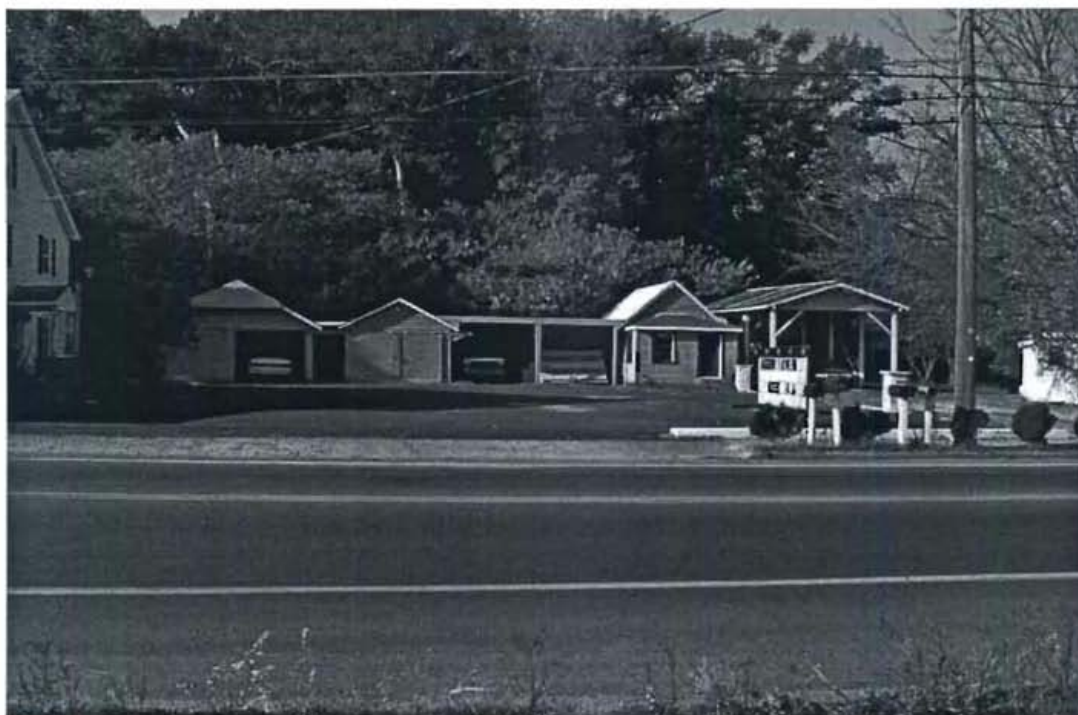


Photo 4-301 Main Street



Photo 5-235 Main Street





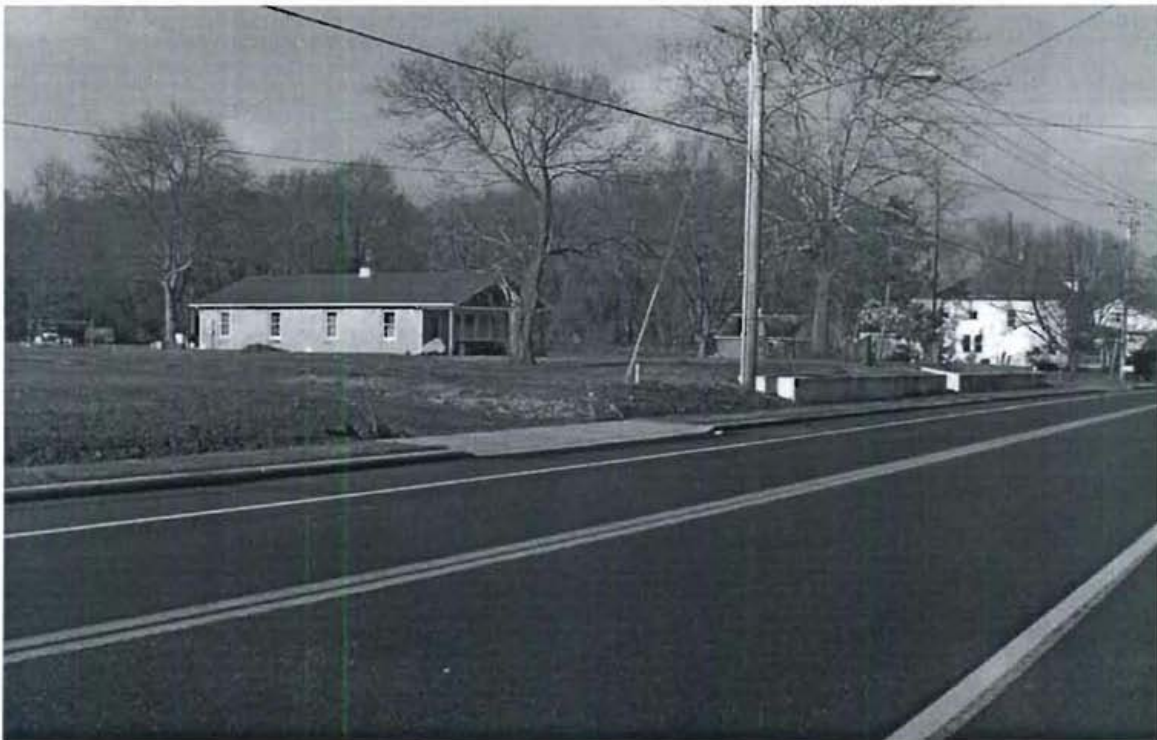
**Photo 6-235 Main Street**



**Photo 7-233 Main Street**



**Photo 8-229 MainStreet**



**Photo 9-232 MainStreet**





Photo 10-236 MainStreet



Photo 11-236 MainStreet



Photo 12- S-763



Photo 13-S-763

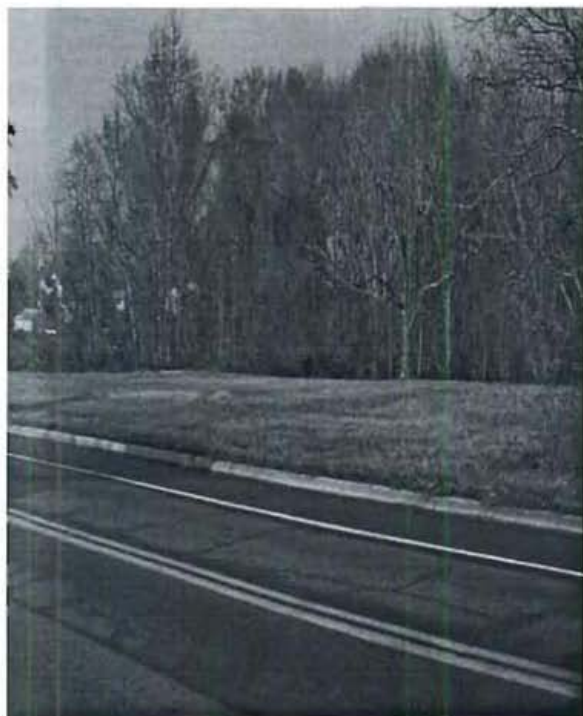


Photo 14-S-763





**Photo 15-Gas Station, Corner of Vines Creek  
and Main Street**



**Photo 16-Gas Station, Corner of Vines Creek  
and Main Street**



**Photo 17- Intersection, Main Street at right,  
looking south.**



**Photo 18-Looking south towards intersection.**



### **Prehistoric Archaeology**

As defined in the Management Plan for Delaware's Prehistorical Cultural Resources, Dagsboro is located within the Coastal Bay Physiographic Zone. In this zone, much of the soil is poorly drained, however, some well drained areas are found in higher elevations and upper terraces of the major drainages (Custer, 16). According to the management plan, this zone has a high potential for Woodland I and Woodland II sites, particularly macro-band base camps and procurement sites, with the data quality as fair to good (Custer, 186). According to archaeological predictive maps, the project area has a low potential for archaeology sites (SHPO, Frankford Quadrangle).

According to soils maps, this section of Dagsboro is characterized by Evesboro Loamy Sand (EvB), usually associated with two to five percent slopes. Other Evesboro Loamy Sand associated with five to fifteen percent slopes (EsD) are in the area. Johnson silt loam (Jo) is present east of Main Street, although not in the project area. Generally, soils in the area range from moderately well to poorly drained with a subsoil of sandy clay or loam (Ames, 35).

No known archaeological studies have been conducted at this location. However, one archaeology survey informs some of the Native American potential in this area. A canoe was found near Dagworthy landing during a deepening and widening of Pepper's Creek around 1933. It seemed that the canoe was made from pine and was described as a "aboriginal kind." (Weslager, C.A., 130).

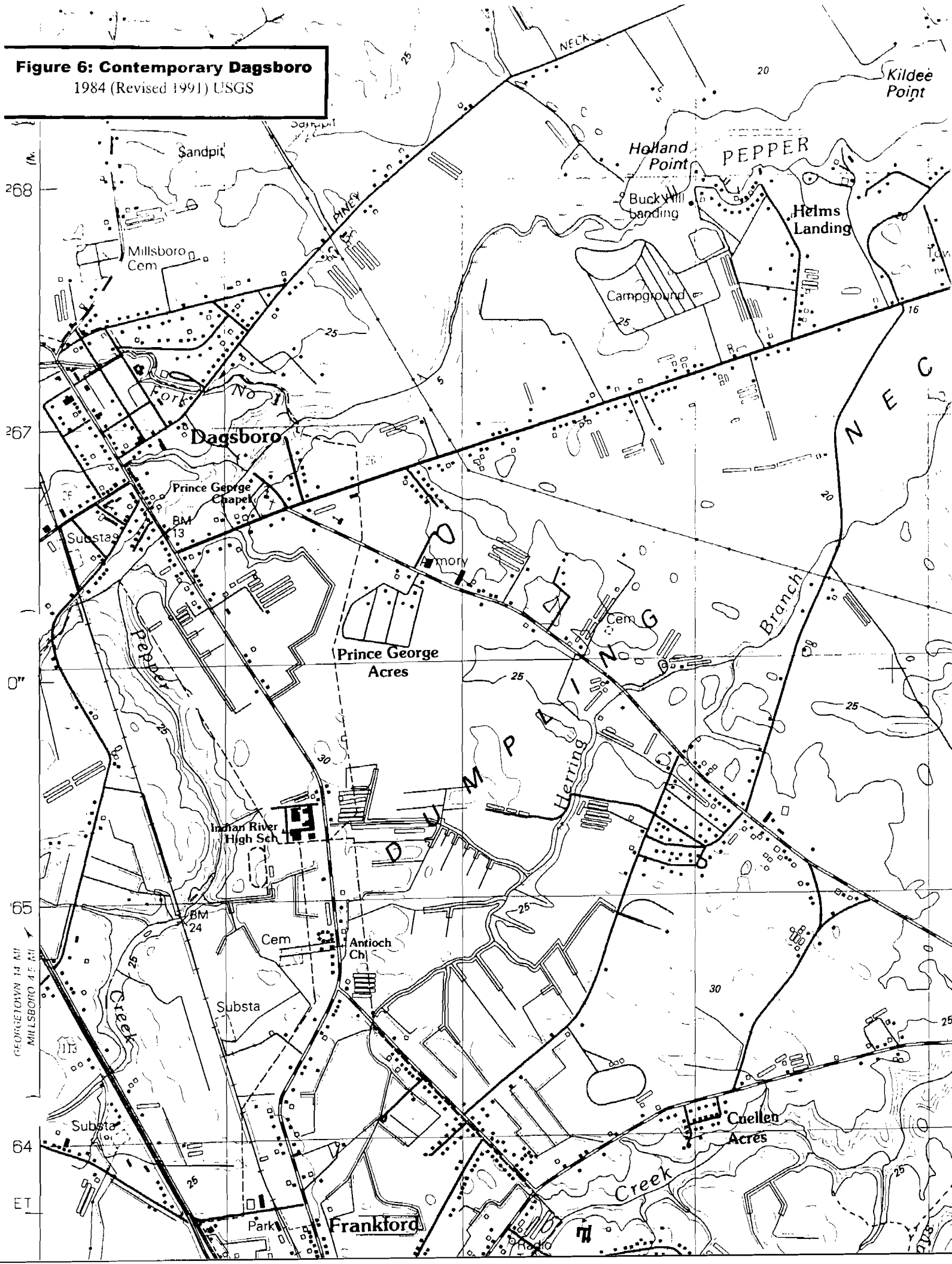
Despite the potential for archaeological sites, this project should not encounter prehistoric archaeology. The most likely location of prehistoric archaeology is near Pepper Creek. However, disturbance associated with road and twentieth century building construction, namely the gas station and underground gas tanks, would probably preclude intact prehistoric archaeology. Nevertheless, levels of disturbance will need to be field verified by SHPO archaeologists. There is a slight chance of prehistoric archaeology on the rear lot of site S-763, but if the proposed alignment remains, then this would not be affected. If the alignment shifts northward, then prehistoric and historic archaeology is possible.

### **Historic Archaeology**

The Management Plan for Delaware's Historical Archaeological Resources developed by Lu Ann De Cunzo and Wade P. Catts offers clues to the potential archaeology of the project area. According to the Management Plan, farmstead sites, grist and sawmills, other timber processing sites, domestic sites on service routes and roads, and transportation related sites are the most likely sources of archaeology in this area. In the Lower Peninsula zone, settlement patterns and transportation networks focused on gristmills, sawmills, and milldams. The mills provided a hub for the surrounding population, and helped sponsor other services, such as taverns, shops, and stores in their vicinity such as they did in Dagsboro.

Previous archaeology investigations have been sparse in the Dagsboro vicinity. This scarcity of archaeology may be attributed to the lack of Section 106 projects in the state's nucleated communities. The historic archaeology management plan suggests that DeIDOT projects, for example, generally

**Figure 6: Contemporary Dagsboro**  
1984 (Revised 1991) USGS





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avoid towns and villages (de Cunzo & Catts, 187). The authors of the management plan recommend that these downtown areas may prove useful to learning about the social and economic network of local nucleated settlement with the agricultural hinterlands. Moreover, they argue that private development, as simple as home improvements, erode the archaeological resource base in communities. Some communities, such as St. Johns and Angola have disappeared from the landscape without the benefit of adequate archaeological survey (De Cunzo & Catts, 188). For these reasons, the authors argue that archaeology should be conducted in small towns, like Dagsboro. Any potential archaeology that might occur with this project would be a useful research and learning tool, and will add valuable information to the state's history.

For known sites, CRS # S-763 has the potential to yield archaeology. However, road and utility work has disturbed the portion of the property nearest the road. Nevertheless, archaeology associated with the house and outbuildings is possible further back on the lot. Archaeology survey work may be necessary at this location depending on the final alignment of road. Additionally, Scharf's history states that Dagworthy's mill was near the state road and bridge, which could refer to the current Bridge 424. Currently, the intersection improvements should not affect this area, but survey work here may be necessary depended on final alignment.

Generally, much of the project area has been disturbed by twentieth century construction focusing on the road, standing structures, and stream channelization west of Main Street. Underground utilities are evident along the current roadway. The intersection shift toward the gas station occurs on areas disturbed by the building and gas pumps. Historic research consisting of USGS, road construction plans, and the Beer's Atlas did not indicate any structures at the corner of SR 26 and Main Street. If this corner at been a site, the presence of the gas station and pumps has most likely disturbed any archaeology at this intersection. Although unlikely, this corner's disturbance and potential for archaeology will need to be verified by DelDOT and SHPO archaeologists, and an archaeological survey at this location may be necessary.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on a field review and preliminary research, there are ten standing structures within the project APE that are fifty years or older. Those buildings on Main Street are potentially contributing to the proposed Dagsboro Historic District. Furthermore, CRS site S-763 may contain archaeological potential. Although the road alignment does not impact this area, future proposed alignments might necessitate archaeological work in this area. Dependent on how the scope of work develops, future cultural resource might consist of completing DE SHPO Cultural Resource Survey forms, developing a historic context for the area, archaeological survey, and determining the eligibility of those properties within the APE. Changes to the intersection alignment may decrease or increase the amount of work necessary to fulfill Section 106 compliance.

Overall, as the alignment appears now, several potentially historic properties will be affected on the southeast quadrant of the project area, namely those homes facing Vines Creek Road. Although we do not know the extent of possible archaeology at site S-763, it seems that impacts to historic properties would be less if the alignment shifted north instead of south at this location, based on evident disturbance near the road. The closer the new intersection keeps to the old alignment the less impacts will occur. The present roadway is already characterized by shoulders and sidewalks, so a closely maintained road should have minimal cultural resource effects.

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The next steps in Section 106 compliance should include discussing a proposed alignment with the DE SHPO, and gather their perspective considering the potential historic properties in the APE. Based on this inter-agency dialogue and proposed alignment, the completion of CRS forms, Determination's of Eligibility, and a possible archaeological survey may be necessary. The Environmental Studies section will continue to consult with DelDOT Planning and the DE SHPO to ensure compliance with Section 106.



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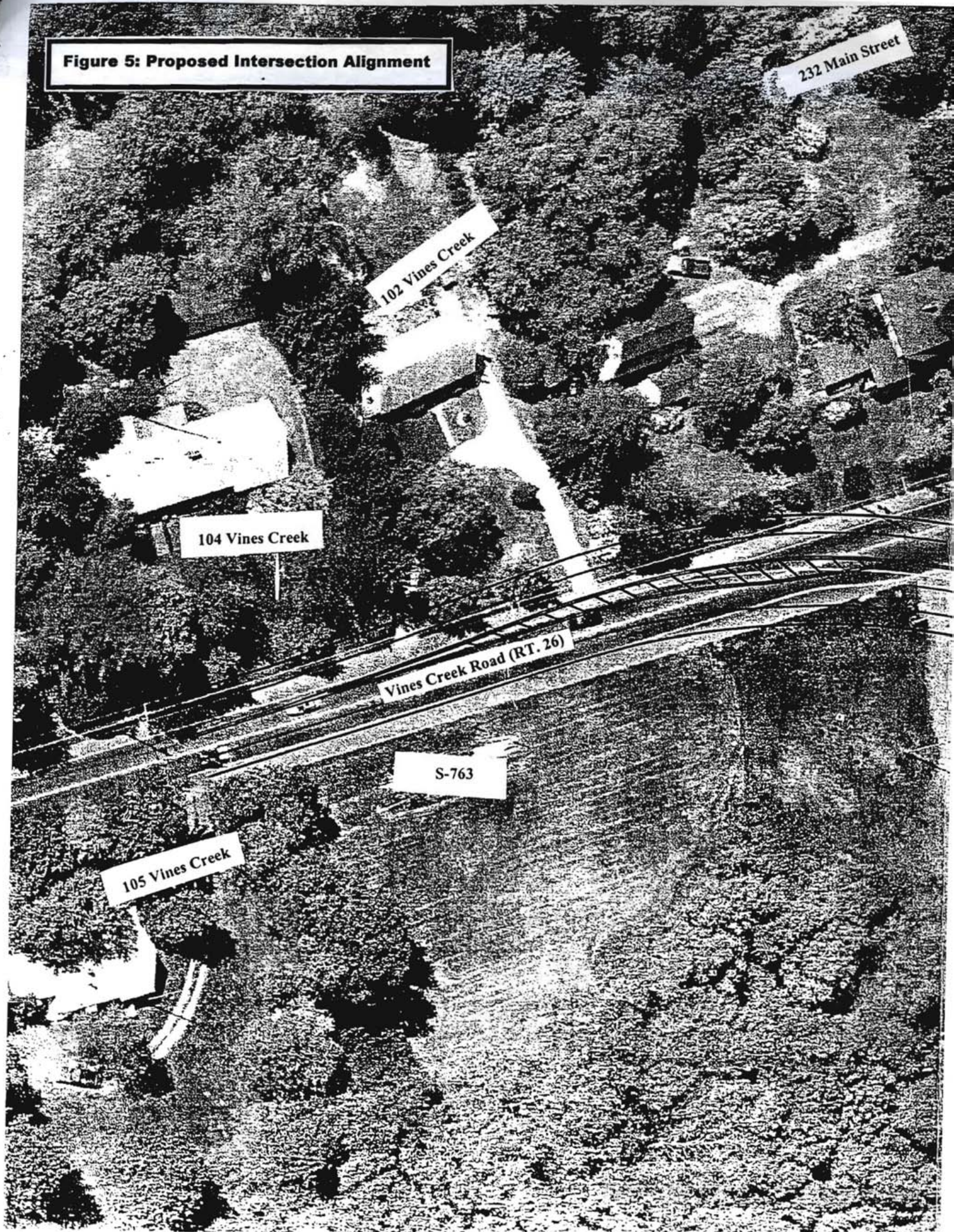
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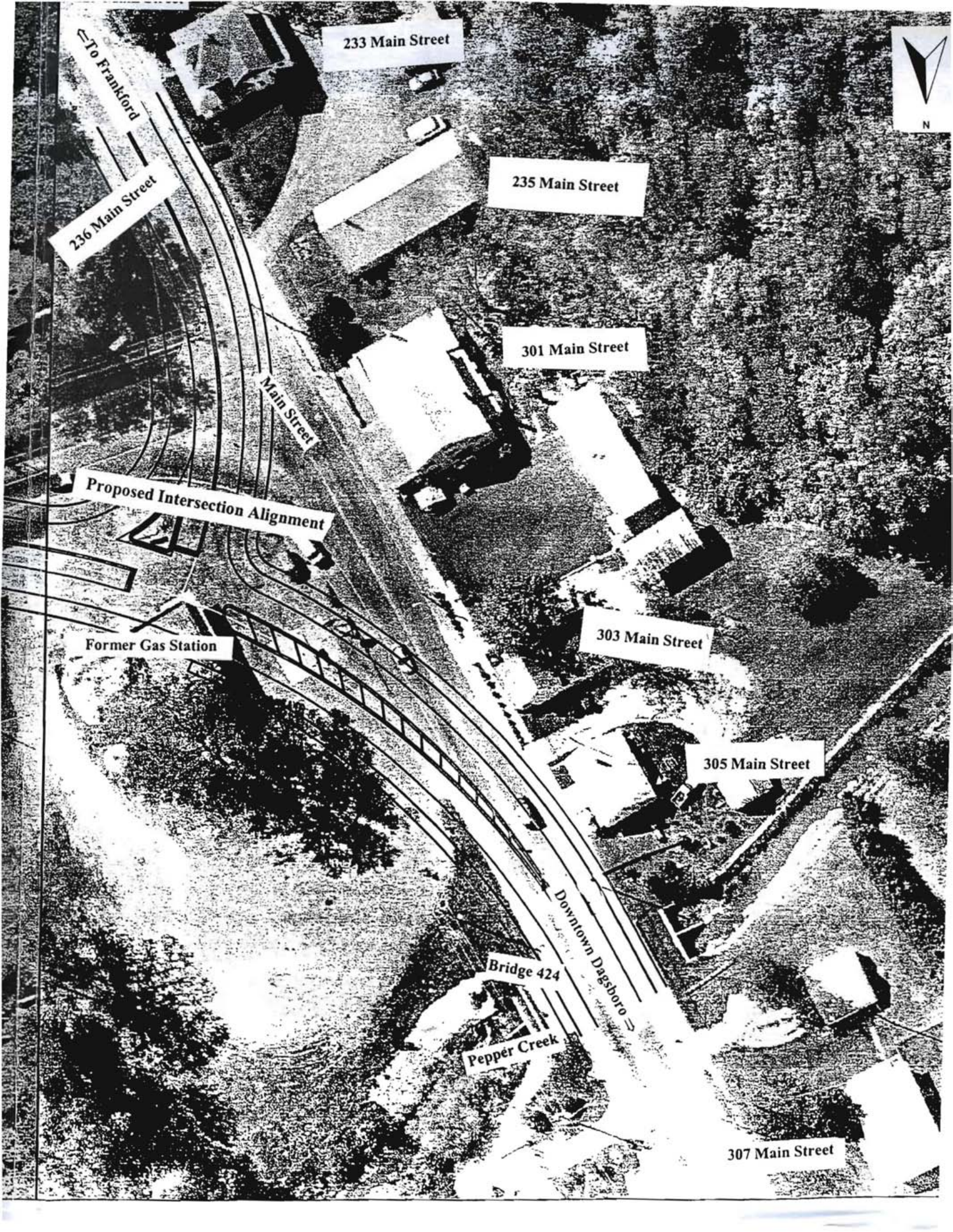
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**Figure 5: Proposed Intersection Alignment**







← To Frankford

233 Main Street

235 Main Street

236 Main Street

301 Main Street

Main Street

Proposed Intersection Alignment

Former Gas Station

303 Main Street

305 Main Street

Bridge 424

Pepper Creek

Downtown Dagsboro →

307 Main Street



